



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Grand Canyon National Park

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Grand Canyon News Release

Release date: Immediate

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Date: January 30, 2008

Grand Canyon National Park Reports Increase in Annual Visitation

Grand Canyon, AZ – Visitation at one of the nation's most visited National Parks rose in 2007 in spite of rising travel costs. Grand Canyon National Park reported just over 4.4 million recreational visitors in 2007 – the highest number of visitors since 2004 and an increase of almost 3 percent over last year.

Across the National Park system, visitation rose by about 1 percent. For gateway communities with travel and tourism related businesses, these increases should have been good news and are believed by industry analysts to reflect not only a recovery from the downturn after 9/11, but industry trends they expect to continue.

Some of the current trends in the travel and tourism industry are adventure travel, Geotourism, family travel, educational travel, fitness travel, travel to historical places and outdoor recreation. All of these trends have the potential to draw more people to their National Parks.

In fact, Grand Canyon may have exceeded the national rate of increase in visitation by taking advantage of one of the biggest trends in travel and tourism—use of technology. The internet is quickly becoming the most popular means of researching travel destinations and opportunities and of making travel arrangements; and Grand Canyon National Park's interpretive staff has decided to reach out to the techno-savvy.

In May, park interpretive staff introduced Ranger Minutes—short multimedia broadcasts available on the park's web site. Last week, they released their first weekly podcast—a short audio program with a radio show format also available through a direct link on the park's web site. And on Friday, January 25, the park introduced an experimental, cell phone, audio tour which visitors to the park can access with their cell phones to get more information about what they are seeing.

According to Grand Canyon Chief of Interpretation Judy Bryan, the park decided to explore these new technologies in order to, “keep up with trends in the younger generation and foreign travelers.” Perhaps keeping up with these user groups and their technologies is one of the keys to attracting future generations to the National Parks.

Those who would like more information on National Park visitation are encouraged to visit the National Park Service Public Use Statistics Office on the web at www2.nature.nps.gov/mpur/index.cfm.

People interested in learning more about Grand Canyon National Park and its new hi-tech endeavors are invited to visit www.nps.gov/grca/photosmultimedia.

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